



Fulfilling Our Promise: **An Invitation to Lead**

Rocky Hill Country Day School
Strategic Plan: 2020 - 2023



ROCKY HILL
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL



Now in my third year as Head of School, firmly rooted in this community, I am truly excited to share this vision for Rocky Hill Country Day School.

We've accomplished so much – all of us – students, families, faculty, and staff. We feel the momentum and excitement within our community every day. At Rocky Hill Country Day School, we have created a safe and supportive environment for students to connect, think expansively, try new things, and achieve wider possibilities. We are in demand.

As we look to the future, particularly in light of the difficult external challenges of the past several months, a three-year strategic plan might seem a bit speculative. Yet, we embrace this forward-looking exercise with a spirit of celebration, creativity, and confidence. True to our mission, we continue to discover, evolve, and improve!

With our dedication to growth, we commit to greater emphasis and prioritization of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Our updated statement on DEI reflects this growing effort: "Rocky Hill Country Day is committed to working against forces of discrimination and oppression. The school seeks diversity and encourages the ongoing sharing of ideas, experiences, and dialogue that will broaden perspectives. By practicing and teaching equity and inclusion, we aim to dismantle systemic racism, oppression, and inequality in our community and the world around us."

The theme of this plan is **Fulfilling Our Promise: An Invitation to Lead**. We have arrived as a leader in educating young people, through a unique marriage of tradition and innovation. Our plan for the future is a living plan, and an open invitation to you. We welcome and encourage your input, thoughts, and ideas as we continue to reflect, reimagine, and refresh what's possible for our students and our community.

We are ready for an incredibly bright, and different, future of education. Come join us on the RHCD journey!



Diane Rich
Head of school

Our Planning Process



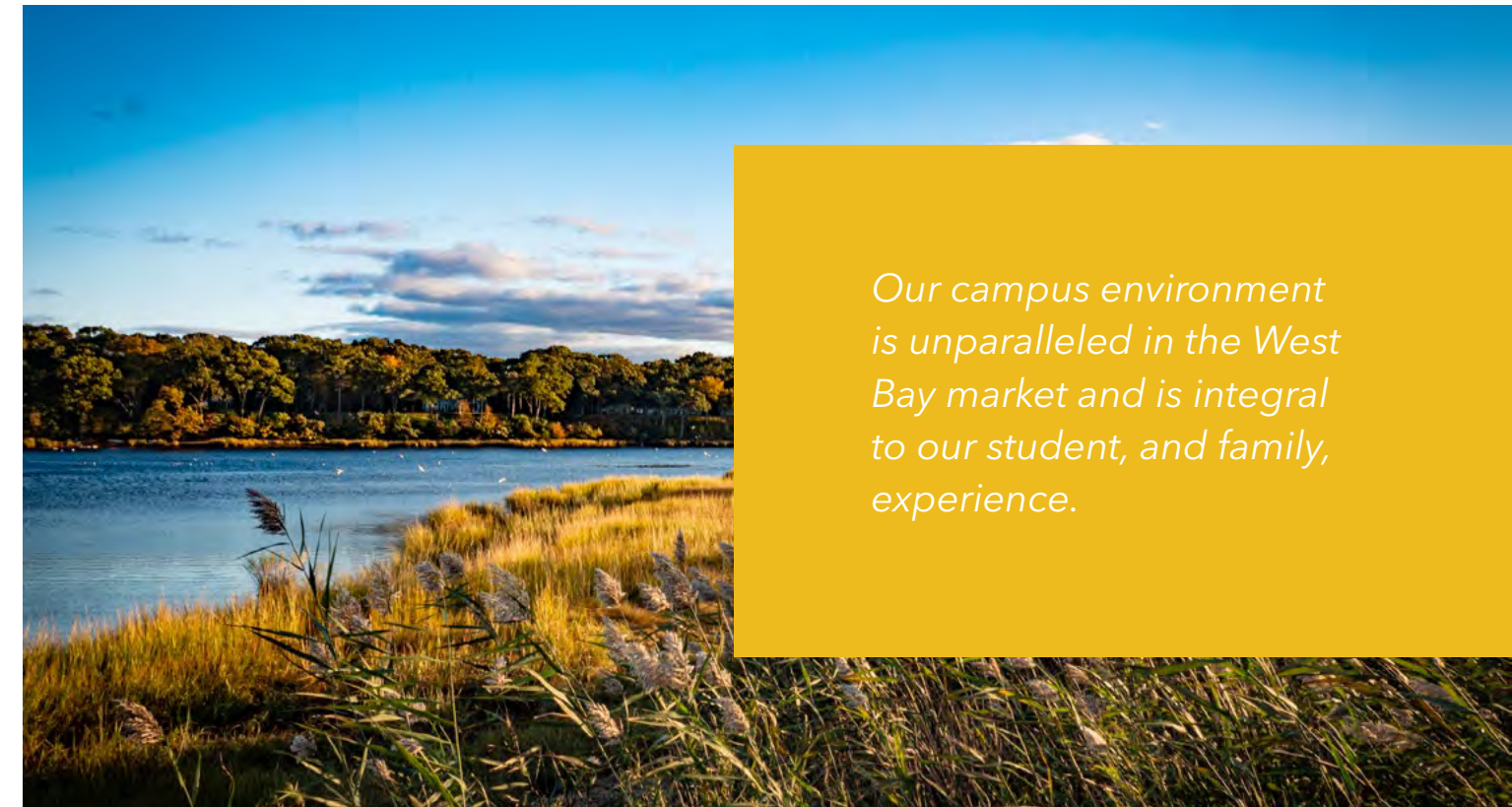
This plan was developed during several months of intensive and joyous work. In keeping with our current marketing mantra, we love to “think outside.” We began the process by asking, “What do we think our students graduating in the year 2030 will need? How will we shape our students, employees, community?” These questions drove our work as we re-envisioned all that Rocky Hill Country Day School could be. With the changing world of work, the increasing access to information, and the accompanying need to discern the veracity of it, as well as our desire to lean into distinguishing elements of our DNA, we set out to determine what we wanted our next decade as a school to look like.

Engaging administrators, staff, faculty, trustees, parents, and students, we conducted listening sessions with our various constituencies. We

formed employee, parent, and student committees to address the areas of interest and redefine our vision. There was tremendous agreement on the desire to have authentic, deep learning experiences which would transcend time and situation. We wanted to shift away from a traditional approach to curriculum, to what I call a “post-content curriculum.” Guided by research from the World Economic Forum, we created our Student Competencies. Next, we turned our sights to the differentiating experiences our students would have to help them engender these skills and mindset.

A watershed moment during this planning process was the shift to online learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We have thrived during this challenge, due in large part to our longstanding adoption of technology, our in-house innovation team and processes, our focus on student social and emotional learning, and our mindfulness and resilience programs. Our families have also been incredibly resourceful and collaborative, and our faculty and staff have worked countless hours to deliver the high quality RHCD experience in new ways.

The pandemic is a test that is unprecedented and ongoing. It has taught us a great deal, providing an opportunity to test our strategic thinking. In designing our successful re-opening of campus, we examined our plans through each of the lenses in this Plan –students, families, employees, and community –determining how best to engage them. Our experience has taught us that this holistic approach is successful, giving us an early sense of confidence and strength as we move forward on these strategic initiatives. We have been forced to “think outside” like never before and accelerate incredible change and innovation in our school. We were ready, with the tools and mindset in place to seize such a moment. Accordingly, our insights and learning have dramatically shaped the current draft of this plan.



Our campus environment is unparalleled in the West Bay market and is integral to our student, and family, experience.

Environment

For more than 75 years, Rocky Hill Country Day School has provided a top tier college preparatory education as Rhode Island’s only N – 12 country day school. Over the years, we have focused on fostering a small school community, where every student matters, allowing for deeper individual instruction and creating a familial setting throughout campus. More recently, our focus has also turned to the exploration and practice of innovative teaching methods. Our high engagement, interactive educational experience encourages students to explore and apply their unique talents and strengths. It was this embedded philosophy and approach which helped smooth the way for our transition to distance learning in the spring of 2020, and to the cautious and creative way we have reopened this fall. As such, RHCD truly represents a fusion of country day school tradition and leading-edge practice in support of our students.

RHCD has many significant opportunities and competitive advantages to leverage. Our campus environment is unparalleled in the West Bay market and is integral to our student, and family, experience. It is a relaxed and freeing environment where students can physically, intellectually and emotionally spread out. Our youthful and highly credentialed faculty adapt to our changing environment. Our investments in innovation and new approaches to learning are maturing and permeating our school culture, creating transformative experiences for our students. Our students are achieving academically, artistically, and athletically. With our commitment to equity and inclusion, the collaborative learning environment pushes students to excel and discover new possibilities. Last but certainly not least, our school community is uniquely supportive, welcoming, and familial. We are, quite literally, a breath of fresh air in the marketplace, offering a unique experience in the school landscape of Rhode Island.

Highlights of Our Strategic Priorities

During the next three years we will:

01.

Enhance enriching, authentic opportunities for students in and out of the classroom, on campus and remotely



05.

Expand our Innovator-in-Residence and Embedded Entrepreneurs programs, and our partnerships with outside organizations, focusing on experiential learning, innovation, entrepreneurship, and social justice



02.

Create a Master Plan to renovate and expand our campus with state-of-the-art facilities, particularly for athletics and the arts



06.

Create unique multigenerational programming that invites parents to participate in the learning process, to discover and learn with their children and in turn positively impact the larger community



03.

Increase diversity of faculty, board of trustees, and student body while prioritizing inclusion and equity



07.

Build on our leadership and expertise in social-emotional learning, mindfulness, and resilience



04.

Expand professional development and curriculum to continue to build an anti-racist, just, equitable and inclusive institution



08.

Achieve and sustain a 'Best Place to Work' culture



Strategic Priorities



Our heritage and past practice are like DNA--deeply embedded throughout our evolution. Based on our founding principles of student-centered innovation and experiential learning, Rocky Hill Country Day School ignites, engages, elevates, and connects its students, families, employees, and community.



Ignite Citizens

Our culture of innovation impacts all elements of our academic, athletic, and arts programs. We are creating exceptional and unique opportunities for students, supported by facilities that match our vision of embedding our student competencies in all we do. We present opportunities for students to become navigators, communicators, citizens, and critical thinkers who are innovative, ethical, self-aware, and globally-minded. Our unwavering commitment to our motto 'know thyself' is visible in all of our students' experiences.

We will:

- Enhance enriching, authentic opportunities for students in and out of the classroom, on campus and remotely, that are grounded in experiential learning and develop the Student Competencies.
- Deepen curriculum development with an emphasis on justice and equity.
- Expand partnerships with outside organizations, both national and international, that align with our mission and vision around experiential learning, innovation, and entrepreneurship in a way that benefits the school and society, such as LEEP Week and the Hack for Global Good.
- Renovate and expand our campus, combining its historic beauty with state-of-the-art facilities in a way that is commensurate with the best-in-class educational experience offered at RHCD.
- True to our motto of "know thyself," continue to focus on the "best fit" post-secondary planning for students, dovetailing 4-year academic planning with personal portfolio planning and goals, optimizing all of a student's talents and skills to meet future opportunities.
- With recent times underscoring the need for social-emotional learning, continue our unwavering commitment to it by integrating mindfulness and resilience building practices throughout our students' experiences.



Engage Families

We believe that educating children is a communal endeavor. Being family and student centered lies at the core of our philosophy. We hold dear our roles as partners with families, shepherding each child within our nurturing environment in the best individual way based on a mutual understanding of what they need. As a school, we are here to partner with every parent and work to provide equitable access and experience. Accordingly, we seek to instill a culture of connectedness to the school community that extends beyond the traffic circle. We ask questions together, we learn together, we play together. And when we do, students flourish.



We will:

- Formalize processes for parents to share insights about their children, participate in goals meetings and planning, and enhance their access to digital platforms to view student work and feedback.
- Engage parents by accessing their time and talent for classroom activities and other roles.
- Create multigenerational programming, as experts in child development, education insight, and leadership, that invites parents to participate in the learning process, to discover and learn with their children.
- Increase parent programs to support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives.
- Connect students, alumni, and families, past and present, through creation of in person and virtual events.



We ask questions together, we learn together, we play together. And when we do, students flourish.



Elevate Employees

Every employee at RHCD is valued because we are all part of the whole. Everyone plays their important part in the community and in the expression of hospitality, with no task being too menial or mundane. As this philosophy permeates the culture, employees feel supported, encouraged to take risks, and celebrated. Rocky Hill Country Day School is a coveted place to work!

We will:

- Create an environment that nurtures employees' personal development and satisfaction, which contributes to building a 'Best Place to Work' culture.
- Working with our Health and Wellness Committee, develop on-campus opportunities for employees' personal health and wellness.
- Increase diversity of faculty and staff.
- Modeling for our students, create an environment that encourages experimentation, exploration, and risk-taking in the classroom and work space in order to grow professionally and achieve excellence.
- Foster leadership in staff and faculty, helping them to develop in, and share, their areas of expertise.

Connect With Our Community

As experts in child development, educational insight, and leadership, we design and present multigenerational programming in academics, the arts, and athletics that invites the wider community to campus. We contribute to that community, and they experience and see in our students a sense of communal concern and moral example. Proud of their alma mater, our Alumni are engaged in the life of the school.

We will:

- Expand community events such as our Mindfulness in Education conference and the Hack for Global Good into international events.
- Continue to partner with local, national, and global businesses in a variety of ways that build opportunities for our students and fulfill our mission to use our wisdom for good.
- Demonstrate our commitment to meeting the needs of our community by actively listening to all stakeholders.
- Increase transparency and accountability with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion through discussion series, public updates, ongoing climate assessment, and other initiatives.





think outside

Inspiring each other to
discover our full selves and
use our wisdom for good.



ROCKY HILL
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL